



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

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February 22, 2023

Ms. Darlene Heller, Director of Planning and Zoning
City of Bethlehem
10 E. Church Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018

**Re: 119 Technology Drive
Rezoning Industrial Development to Central Business
City of Bethlehem**

Dear Ms. Heller:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items primarily takes place during the Committee meeting. Both meetings will be virtual and held on:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - March 21, 2023, at 12:00 PM
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - March 23, 2023, at 7:00 PM

The rezoning review is for a parcel of land located at 119 Technology Drive, the subject property is at the confluence of the Philip J. Fahy Memorial Bridge, East 2nd Street, and Columbia Street in South Bethlehem. The location is currently zoned Industrial Redevelopment (IR) and abuts a Central Business (CB) to the West and to the South. This site is one block from the main retail corridor on 3rd Street.

The re-zoning is requested for a future development that would include 240 apartment units.

According to the *City of Bethlehem Zoning Ordinance, Part 13 Last Revised August 17, 2022* (CBZO) the CB Zoning area is intended, 'To provide for an orderly coordinated development of varied commercial business and office uses in combination with limited intensive residential development in the central business areas of North Bethlehem and South Bethlehem, and to encourage excellence of design in the development of

properties. To promote pedestrian-friendly uses, as opposed to uses that are auto dependent.'

The LVPC review does not include an in-depth examination of plans relative to subdivision design standards or ordinance requirements since these items are covered in the municipal review. The LVPC provides comments based on *FutureLV* the Regional Plan. The municipal review will determine if the intended purpose of the rezoning fits within the definition of 'limited intensive residential development' (CBZO) and if the possible future development would 'promote pedestrian-friendly uses, as opposed to uses that are auto dependent' (CBZO).

If the future development would be designed in alignment with the objectives of this Ordinance the rezoning of this parcel would align with multiple goals and policies of *FutureLV* the Regional Plan such as, "Integrate mixed transportation into public space design", 'Improve connections between bus stops and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.'" (both of Policy 5.2), "Promote revitalization of walkable historic centers', (of Policy 5.3), and 'Promote development that complements the unique history, environment, culture and needs of the Valley' (of Policy 5.4).

It would also align with Policy 1.4 to 'encourage an efficient development process that is responsive to regional needs' and support a core strategy of *FutureLV* to increase density in urban areas using infill development (Density Special Section, page 71).

Municipalities, when considering Zoning Ordinance Amendments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)].

Sincerely,



Bambi Griffin Rivera
Senior Community and Regional Planner

cc: Tad J. Miller, City Clerk